**Strategic storage of crude oil**

5066. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high power committee of the Planning Commission has strongly recommended strategic storage of crude oil for ensuring oil security in the country;

(b) if so, whether the strategic storage of crude oil has assumed greater importance now due to significant build-up of refining capacity in the country;

(c) whether Government have accepted the recommendations of the Planning Commission; and

(d) if so, by when final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERTROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Steering Committee on energy sector of Planning Commission for the Tenth Plan recommended maintenance of strategic reserves and developing a mechanism for funding these reserves. No decision has been taken in this regard as yet.

**Marketing strategy of oil companies**

5067. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of marketing and distribution strategies of Government owned oil companies in view of the withdrawal of APM and the proposed entry of private companies;

(b) whether Government propose to allow competition among these Government owned oil companies so that consumer is fully benefited; and

(c) what steps Government would like to take so that the marketing and distribution costs are brought down to the minimum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have signed agreements among themselves for products and hospitality arrangements in line with the distribution system prevailing before the dismantling of Administered Price Mechanism (APM) for a period of two years with effect from 1.4.2002.